

NATURALISTIC PHOTOGRAPHY.

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FOR

STUDENTS OF THE ART

BY

P. H. EMERSON, B.A., M.B. (CANTAB.)

AUTHOR OF "PICTURES OF EAST ANGLIAN LIFE," "PICTURES FROM LIFE IN FIELD AND FEN," "IDYLS OF THE NORFOLK BROADS," AND JOINT AUTHOR OF "LIFE AND LANDSCAPE ON THE NORFOLK BROADS."

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

KEATS, "*Ode on a Grecian Urn*."



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TO THE MEMORY
OF
ADAM SALOMON

SCULPTOR AND PHOTOGRAPHER,
Chevalier de l'ordre de la légion d'honneur,

This work is Dedicated

BY THE AUTHOR

AS A TRIBUTE OF ADMIRATION AND RESPECT
FOR THE FIRST ARTIST OF ACKNOWLEDGED ABILITY WHO WAS ORIGINAL ENOUGH
TO PRACTISE PHOTOGRAPHY FOR ITS OWN SAKE,
AND WHO WAS BRAVE ENOUGH
TO APPEAR BEFORE A PREJUDICED ART WORLD AS A PHOTOGRAPHER
AS WELL AS A SCULPTOR.

Bonne renommée vaut mieux que ceinture dorée.

CHAPTER IV.

HINTS ON ART.

- Practical hints.** As practical hints for working cannot be woven into a continuous text, we will give them separately.
- Prizes for "set subjects."** Never compete for prizes for "set subjects," for work of this kind leads to working from preconceived ideas, and therefore to conventionality, false sentiment, and vulgarity.
- Man originally vulgar.** Remember that the original state of the minds of uneducated men is vulgar, you now know why vulgar and commonplace works please the majority. Therefore, educate your mind, and fight the hydra-headed monster—vulgarity. Seize on any aspect of nature that pleases you and try and interpret it, and ignore—as nature ignores—all childish rules, such as that the lens should work only when the sun shines or when no wind blows.
- Æolus.** Æolus is the breath of life of landscape.
- Merit of photographs.** The chief merit of most photographs is their diagrammatic accuracy, as it is their chief vice.
- Pseudo-scientific photographers and art.** Avoid the counsels of pseudo-scientific photographers in art matters, as they have avoided the study of art.
- Resolution.** If you decide on taking a picture, let nothing stop you, even should you have to stand by your tripod for a day.
- Point of sight.** Do not climb a mast, or sit on the weathercock of a steeple, to photograph a landscape; remember no one will follow you up there to get your point of sight.
- Rembrandt pictures.** Do not talk of Rembrandt pictures, there was but one Rembrandt. Light your pictures as best you can and call them your own.
- "Artist photographers."** Do not call yourself an "artist-photographer" and

make "artist-painters" and "artist-sculptors" laugh; call yourself a photographer and wait for artists to call you brother.

Remember why nearly all portrait photographs are so unlike the people they represent—because the portrait lens as often used gives false drawing of the planes and false tonality, and then, comes along the retoucher to put on the first part of the uniform, and he is followed by the vignetter and burnisher who complete the disguise.

Falsity of photographic portraits.

The amount of a landscape to be included in a picture is far more difficult to determine than the amount of oxidizer or alkali to be used in the developer.

Amount of landscape to be included in a picture.

Pay no heed to the average photographer's remarks upon "flat" and "weak" negatives. Probably he is flat, weak, stale and unprofitable; your negative may be first-rate, and probably is if he does not approve of it.

"Flat" and "weak" negatives.

Do not allow bad wood-cutters and second-rate process-mongers to produce libels of your work.

Bad wood-cutters.

Be broad and simple.

Broad and simple.

Work hard and have faith in nature's teachings.

Work and faith.

Remember there is one moment in the year when each particular landscape looks at its best, try and secure it at that moment.

The propitious moment.

Do not put off doing a coveted picture until another year, for next year the scene will look very different. You will never be able twice to get exactly the same thing.

Procrastination.

Vulgarity astonishes, produces a sensation; refinement attracts by delicacy and charm and must be sought out. Vulgarity obtrudes itself, refinement is unobtrusive and requires the introduction of education.

Vulgarity.

Art is not legerdemain; much "instantaneous" work is but jugglery

Art and legerdemain.

Though many painters and sculptors talk glibly of "going in for photography," you will find that very few of them can ever make a picture by photography; they lack the science, technical knowledge, and above all, the practice. Most people think they can play tennis, shoot, write novels, and photograph as well as any other person—until they try.

"Going in for photography."